



Newsletter

Bracknell Conservation Volunteers

Newsletter No. 18

29 March 2017

What we've been doing

28 March 2017

Lily Hill Park (Starch Copse)

Leader: Graham Coe

BFC ranger: John Morris

This was a continuation of previous work, clearing holly, bramble and alder from around specimen *Rhododendron* trees.

The cleared materials were burnt on a bonfire, started by Richard using a fire steel and cotton wool impregnated with Vaseline® as suggested in our Bushcraft activities day on 14 March 2017. No matches or kindling were used; the bonfire was very successful. 12 volunteers were present. It was sunny with some light cloud, and amazingly warm for the time of year.

It was very nice to see Don Petford, who walked up to visit us.

Here is a volunteer with a large holly tree in tow (slightly blurred in the original):



Photograph © Bracknell Conservation Volunteers 2017

General activity around the bonfire:



Large numbers of wood anemones (*Anemone nemorosa*) were flowering in Starch Copse:



Photograph © Bracknell Conservation Volunteers 2017

This member of the buttercup family (*Ranunculaceae*) is a good ancient woodland indicator, since it spreads relatively slowly, although these plants may have been planted recently.

<http://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/discover-wild-plants-nature/plant-fungi-species/wood-anemone>

Previous visits

We last visited Starch Copse on 7 March 2017, doing the same task. The bonfire was started with matches on this occasion.

Lily Hill Park

Lily Hill Park covers 56 acres. The site offers a wide range of habitats for wildlife including wildflower meadows, ornamental woodland and ancient woodland. The collection of specimen *Rhododendron* varieties is of historical importance, and has been largely untouched since 1922.

Lily Hill Park is an important wildlife corridor with links to neighbouring woodlands at Scott's Hill and Clinton's Hill.

See <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/lily-hill-park-leaflet.pdf>

Coming up next

4 April 2017

Wentworth Way woods

Boardwalk removal, creation of raised path.

What to look for

Look out for brimstone butterflies (*Gonepteryx rhamni*); these are unmistakable large yellow butterflies which fly very fast. The caterpillars feed on Purging Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) and Alder Buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*).

<http://butterfly-conservation.org/50-1310/brimstone.html>

Danish scurvy grass (*Cochlearia danica*) is flowering along road verges and central reservations. In some years the edges of roads are coloured pink-purple for miles with the flowers. The Bagshot Road is especially rich in flowers. This is a native seaside plant originally from Eastern England and Scotland, which has colonised the salt-splash zone along roads. This relative of garden rocket has leaves which are edible and very tasty (but don't stop on the Bagshot Road to pick it).

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-21123964>

[http://wildflowerfinder.org.uk/Flowers/S/Scurvygrass\(Danish\)/Scurvygrass\(Danish\).htm](http://wildflowerfinder.org.uk/Flowers/S/Scurvygrass(Danish)/Scurvygrass(Danish).htm)

Fire steels

A fire steel is in fact quite a complex thing:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferrocium>

You may not have realised that our Chairman is carrying round cerium, lanthanum, neodymium and praseodymium in his pocket.

Contact Bracknell Conservation Volunteers

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